

Message Text

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FOLLOWING REPEAT BEIRUT 3348-U ACTION USIA JIDDA 17 MAR

UNCLAS BEIRUT 3348

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EO 11652: NA

SUBJ: ARAMCO SPEAKERS PROGRAM

1. POST HAS BEEN CONTACTED BY NEVILLE ROBINSON, CURRENTLY SERVING ARAMCO IN DHAHRAN AS CONSULTANT IN PROFESSIONAL AND MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT. ROBINSON INFORMS THAT ARAMCO SEEKING TO SPONSOR JOINTLY WITH COLLEGE OF MINERALS AND PETROLEUM IN DHAHRAN A "DISTINGUISHED LECTURER" PROGRAM WHICH WOULD BRING FIVE OF SIX TOP-NOTCH LECTURERS TO DHAHRAN ANNUALLY. ARAMCO'S INTEREST IS BOTH TO PLAY CONSTRUCTIVE COMMUNITY ACTION ROLE VIS-A-VIS COLLEGE AND COMMUNITY AND
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ALSO PROVIDE MORE STIMULATING INTELLECTUAL

ATMOSPHERE FOR ITS OWN EMPLOYEES.

2. POST BELIEVES THIS EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO GET SOME ADDITIONAL HEAVY-WEIGHTS INTO USIS CIRCUIT AND DISCUSSED FOLLOWING PROCEDURES WITH ROBINSON. AGENCY MIGHT SUGGEST POSSIBLE SPEAKERS, EACH TOP-LEVEL IN HIS FIELD, AND AFTER SECURITY ARAMCO APPROVAL WOULD CONTACT THE SPEAKERS THEMSELVES TO WORK OUT DATE AND HONORARIUM MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE TO ARAMCO AND SPEAKER. AGENCY WOULD THEN CONTACT POSTS ALONG OR NEAR ROUTE AND TRY TO BUILD FURTHER AREA SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS AROUND DHAHRAN DATE WITH COSTS OF DIVERSIONARY TRAVEL, HONORARIUMS ETC HANDLED BY ACCEPTING POSTS.

3. ALTHOUGH ARAMCO CHARY OF POLITICAL SUBJECTS, PARTICULARLY FOR INITIAL SPEAKER, WHEN RECENT QUANDT AND KERR VISITS TO AREA DISCUSSED WITH ROBINSON HE AGREED SUCH VISITS WERE FEASIBLE AS LONG AS TOPICS CAREFULLY SELECTED AND SPEAKERS AS EXPERIENCED AND SKILLFUL AS THOSE NAMED. HE ALSO INDICATED A TOP U S AUTHOR, TOP SOCIAL AND PHYSICAL SCIENTISTS, AND A TOP ECONOMIST ALL WOULD BE WELCOME, SO LONG AS NONE ARE ON RECORD WITH PRO-ISRAELI BIAS WHICH WOULD EMBARRASS COLLEGE OF MINERALS AND PETROLEUM AS THEIR SPONSOR IS SAUDI ARABIA.

4. POST BELIEVES THIS COULD BE REAL BREAKTHROUGH IN GETTING MORE TOP LEVEL SPEAKERS INTO AREA, IF CAREFULLY COORDINATED BY INA AND ICS OR BOTH. WOULD APPRECIATE AGENCY COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS, WHICH CAN BE RELAYED TO ARAMCO DHAHRAN VIA TELEX IN ARAMCO BEIRUT OFFICE.

5. FOR JIDDA: ARAMCO'S WASHINGTON REP HAD ADVISED ROBINSON TO CHECK IN FIRST WITH RUGGIERO AND THEN CURTISS FOR ADVICE ON HOW TO GET PROJECT STARTED. HIS ITINERARY TOOK HIM FIRST TO BEIRUT BUT HE EXPECTS VISIT JIDDA SHORTLY AND DISCUSS SAME SUBJ WITH YOU AT THAT TIME. CURTISS UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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